

REMARKS

Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection of the claims in the office action mailed September 13, 2004 and respectfully request reconsideration. Applicants are enclosing a corrected Information Disclosure Statement.

The examiner rejected the claims on the basis that the limitation of a preform having "at least one leg" did not appear to have support in the original disclosure. Applicants have now amended that phrase to "a leg" and submit that the original disclosure does support the amendment. Of course, the new phrase "a leg" has the same meaning as "at least one leg", however, the latter phrase is not necessary because the dependent claims do not refer to more than one leg.

Paragraph 17 on page 6, second sentence, mentions that preform 23 could have other shapes, such as a T-shaped preform. A T-shaped preform would have only one leg. The amended claims require a leg, and all of the drawings show a preform having a leg. The fact that the drawings show preforms having two legs does not mean that applicants have to limit the invention to preforms with two legs. Applicants therefore respectfully request reconsideration of this rejection.

The examiner also rejected the claims as being indefinite because of the use of "one of the surfaces of the base" and "one of the surfaces of the leg" rather than specifying the surface against which the resin film would be placed. The examiner stated that if the resin films were placed on the inner surface of the leg and the second surface of the base, the invention cannot function as described. Applicants respectfully disagree and request reconsideration.

In the embodiment of Figure 4, resin films 45 are placed on the outer or first sides of legs 29. Resin film 41 is placed on the second or outer side of base 25. However, in Figure 5 resin

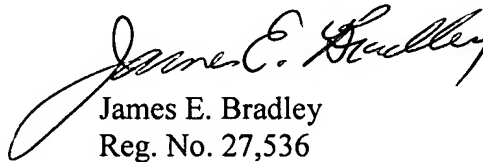
films 61 are on the inner sides of legs 29, rather than the outer side as in Figure 4. The invention does function with resin films 59 on the second side of base 27 and resin films 61 on the inside surface of legs 29. Heat and pressure causes the resin to infuse into legs 29 and base 25. Separator films 63 separate base 29 and legs 25.

The embodiment of Figure 6 also shows resin films 71 located on the inside or second surface of legs 29 while base resin films 69 are located on the second side of base 25. This arrangement is also shown in the embodiment of Figure 7.

Applicants submit that the claims are now in condition for allowance. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and favorable action.

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Respectfully submitted,


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